

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 635

By Pruitt

A RESOLUTION to create the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans to examine matters related to wage discrimination.

WHEREAS, the existence of wage discrimination by sex and race in the United States is well-established and documented, and women and people of color are disproportionately impacted in a harmful way by disparities in earnings; and

WHEREAS, despite the enactment of two federal laws almost a half century ago to protect all Americans against wage discrimination, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, stubborn wage gaps are real and demonstrable across the nation and within Tennessee's workforce; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic, Series PINC-05, 2010 Median Annual Earning of Year-Round, Full-time Workers, earnings for all women was seventy-seven percent (77%) of earnings for all men; earnings for African-American women was sixty-seven and seven tenths percent (67.7%) of all men's earnings; Latinas' earnings were fifty-eight and seven tenths percent (57.7%) of all men's earnings; and, earnings of Asian-American women was eighty-six and six tenths percent (86.6%) of all men's earnings; and

WHEREAS, meaningful dialogue focused on exploration of innovative and implementable strategies and initiatives, including but not limited to public policy solutions, that lead to a greater realization of equity in pay between men and women and across gender, race, and age differences, is good and can be highly productive in eliciting insight and ideas to alleviate the burden of wage discrimination from Tennesseans which will protect their health and well being both now and in the future; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that there is hereby created a special commission to address causes of wage discrimination in Tennessee and make recommendations for bringing about pay equity for all citizens in the workforce of this great State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this special commission shall be known as the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall set its agenda on matters pertaining to economic and workforce trends, and it shall examine valid and reliable research and data from federal and state agencies as well as credible sources of like information from the private sector.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the outcomes of the work of the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall be recommendations for policy and practice that have high likelihood of diminishing the existence of wage discrimination in the future in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to as great an extent as possible, the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall base their recommendations on practices and approaches that are supported by evidence gleaned from valid and reliable research in the fields of workforce development and business psychology.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall be inclusive and reflective of the racial, gender, geographic, and economic diversity of the State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the membership of the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall be comprised of six (6) non-legislative members who are representative of the State's business community, business organizations, trade associations, advocacy groups, research experts, and unions, and the Speaker of the Senate shall appoint three (3) such members and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint three (3) such members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that one member of the Senate appointed by the Speaker of that Chamber and one member of the House of Representatives appointed by the

Speaker of that Chamber shall serve as ex officio members of the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all appropriate State agencies shall provide assistance to the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans, upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all legislative members of Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such commission until the commission reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. Non-legislative members shall serve without compensation or reimbursement for expenses incurred subsequent to their membership and participation with such commission.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall be convened no later than July 1, 2012, by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect from among its membership a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the commission deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission on Pay Equity for Tennesseans shall timely report its findings and recommendation, including any proposed legislation, to the Governor and to all members of the One Hundred Eighth General Assembly no later than February 1, 2013, at which time the commission shall cease to exist.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.